

Hillcrest Park

1300 N. Harbor Boulevard

1920; improved in 1930s

**Status: Local Landmark;
Listed on the National Register**



Constructed on 35.6 acres, Hillcrest Park is the city's largest, most beautiful, and historically significant park. In January 1920, the city of Fullerton purchased 33.65 acres for \$67,300 for use as a park; two acres of the property had been acquired earlier for a reservoir in 1913, and the remaining property was considered ideal for park purposes. By 1922, formal plans for Hillcrest Park were completed by Fullerton's first park superintendent, Johann George Seupelt.

While the park's mature landscaping is attributed to Seupelt's work in the 1920s, much of Hillcrest Park's distinctive look is due to work completed during the Great Depression. Because many of the park's visible elements, such as the fountain and road rockwork, were built by Work Projects Administration workers, much of the general information about the park incorrectly assumes that the WPA was responsible for all of the Depression-era parkland improvements. In reality, Fullerton officials took full advantage of funding offered through a number of Depression-era programs: the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, Civil Works Administration, State Emergency Relief Administration, and the Work Projects Administration.

One of Hillcrest Park's most distinctive features is the flagstone that runs throughout the parkland. The stonework, which was used as an exterior finish over concrete, delineates activity areas, creates separate spaces within the park, and serves as a unifying element, providing design continuity throughout the parkland. The hand-crafted use of natural materials, common for WPA park construction, also lends a rustic and woodland feeling to the park.

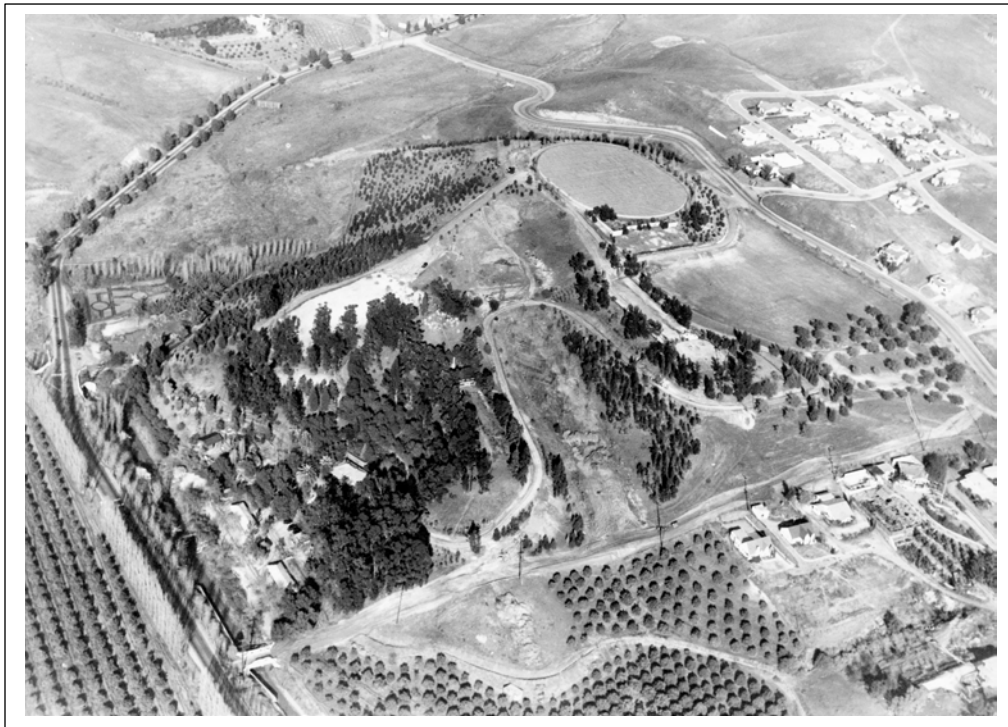
Hillcrest Park contains two war monuments and three plaques that honor Fullerton servicemen killed during major wars fought in the 19th and 20th centuries. Since 1983, memorial services have been held annually on Veterans Day at the two monuments. The park also has three distinctive buildings. The Hillcrest Recreation Center is the former American Legion Patriotic Hall, constructed in 1932, on land donated by the city of Fullerton in 1927. The other small recreation building off Lemon Street is the former Fullerton Boys and Girls Library (1927) that was moved to the park in 1940. Located centrally in

the park is the Izaak Walton League Cabin. This rustic building is a reconstruction of a 1931-era cabin that was destroyed by fire in December 1990.

A master plan for Hillcrest Park was adopted in 1996 and revised in 2011. The master plan requires the restoration, retention and preservation of historic features and buildings, in particular, the stone work that was completed in the 1930s. In 2017, a specific design to the front portion of the park along Harbor Boulevard was approved, and major improvements, including the full restoration of the stone work and fountain, were completed in April, 2018.



Hillcrest Park, 1936



Hillcrest Park, aerial photo, 1931